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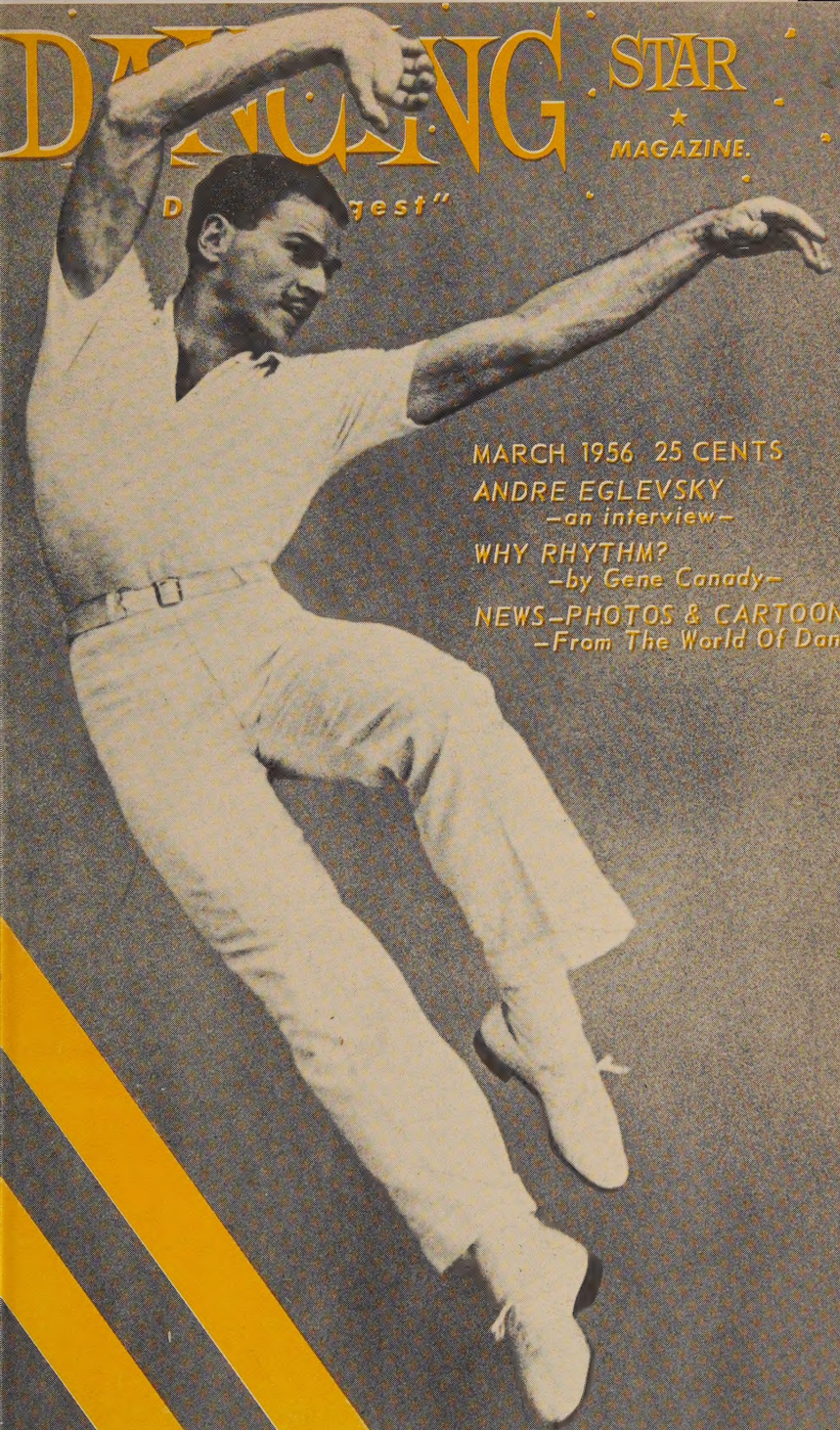

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–an interview–

WHY RHYTHM?
–by Gene Canady–

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THE COVER

Fabulous Andre Eglevsky is as fine a person to talk to as he is to watch. For a close-up of the man himself, be sure to read the informal interview with Eglevsky which begins on page 96.

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WHY RHYTHM?

by

Gene Cannady

Because dancers are a notoriously devoted, hard-working folk, the old expression "I wouldn't lift a finger to do such-and-such" can hardly be applied to them.

. . . particularly, since one of the most vital parts of dance can be studied outside of class, **and can be practiced merely by lifting a finger!**

It is, of course, rhythm.

Music without rhythm is unthinkable, and dance without rhythm is an impossibility. Dance, in fact, has been described as "visual rhythm." When the two arts merge, rhythm is the overlapping area, the technical medium common to both.

Since it is equally important to both arts, a knowledge of rhythm, and the ability to read rhythm, is as necessary to the dancer as to the musician.

Sometimes, it is hard to understand rhythms aurally, that is, just by listening to them. When this happens, the musician — with his system of notation — has a tremendous advantage. A casual glance at the printed score quickly solves his problem. Meanwhile, back at the ranch, the poor dancer is still struggling to follow the troublesome passage by ear.

Obviously, what the dancer needs is to learn to read rhythm so **he** can refer to the score when in trouble.

But what is rhythm? And why is it so important?

Dance and music are arts that exist in time. Even the shortest dance or piece of music is terribly complicated from the standpoint of time. From the moment a piece begins until it ends a great many individual movements and sounds of varying lengths must be fitted into the structure at exactly the right place. They must occur at the right time and last for the right amount of time.

The human mind is extremely limited in its time-sense. It cannot really grasp even a single minute's music or dance as a whole. That is, it can't picture every movement, and the length of that movement, simultaneously.

But the mind is ingenious. What it can't grasp as a whole, it can grasp as a group of parts. It can divide a minute into sections, and the sections into smaller sections, until it arrives at a length of time short enough to be easily comprehended. →

This division of time is the function of rhythms.

Rhythm regulates the time-durations of movements in dance, and the time-durations of sounds in music. It rigidly governs the "when" — when a movement begins, and when it ends. It is rich in resources, ranging from the simple **thump! thump!** of a marching step to the complex syncopations of Stravinsky.

But it is more than just a timing mechanism; it is also a structure, using the principles of Contrast and Repetition to build the form of an entire work.

Putting it another way, rhythm divides the time into basic units small enough to accurately measure the quickest movements and sounds, and it groups and re-groups these units into larger and still larger sections to build form and structure.

In its first aspect, rhythm splinters time into tiny segments with a series of steady, even pulsations called "beats." The frequency with which these occur (that is, their speed) is called "tempo." It is against these beats that the individual sounds and movements are gauged.

A movement may be equal in length to one beat, to several beats, or even to a fraction of a beat. The usual fractions are the half, the quarter, the sixteenth, and the third.

Translating this into terms of dance, imagine that a bit of choreography requires the dancer to take eight steps, turn the head from side to side four times, and lift the arms from a low to a high position. The entire sequence is to be performed in four beats.

Each step will be taken in half a beat's time, the head will use a full beat for each turn, and the arm movement will be spread out over the entire four beats.

In this illustration, the rhythmic beats accurately regulated the duration and position in time of each individual movement.

But suppose the time alloted had been thirty-two beats instead of four. Such a long series of identical beats would be impossibly confusing. The mind can no more comprehend the whole of such a series than it can grasp a complete dance as a whole.

When more than a few beats are involved, the series must be broken down; the beats must be grouped into sections, which in turn can be grouped into still larger sections to build this structure.

This grouping function is the second aspect of rhythm.

In order to combine individual beats into a larger unit, some way of marking off the group must be found. It must be separated from the sections before and after it. This is done by accenting — that is, stressing — the first beat of the group.

Such a group, composed of individual beats, is called a "measure" or "bar." In music notation, measures are indicated by a vertical line (or bar) across the staff. In Labanotation, the bar-lines are horizontal.

Measures usually contain two, three, four, six, or nine beats. (Modern composers sometimes introduce measures of five or seven beats). Two-beat measures are used for marches; three-beat measures are used to indicate the beats: "ONE, Two; ONE, Two." If two notes must be counted for each beat, (that is in the halfway point between beats must be marked), the syllable "and" is used: "ONE, and, Two, and; ONE, and, Two, and." If still further

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division is necessary, the syllable "da" serves: "ONE, and-da, Two ,and-da."

With the formation of the measure, and the introduction of an accented beat, the principle of "Contrast" appears. If a measure contains two beats, for example, the pattern will be: STRONG BEAT ,weak beat; STRONG BEAT, weak beat.

"Variety Within Unity" is the first law of art, and this two-beat measure is a perfect example: Variety (the contrast between strong and weak beats) Within Unity ,the unified whole of the measure).

When two measures are grouped together, the principle of Contrast again appears, and the second measure is weaker rhythmically than the first. In a four-measure section, the second two measures are weaker than the first two. And in a "Phrase," an eight-measure section, the second four measures are not as strong as the first four.

Contrast is a little like a fan — the further it extends, the more it encompasses.

When two phrases are combined, the second is weaker, and is a contrast to the first. This arrangement is called a "Two-part Song Form." If the first phrase is repeated after the second phrase has been stated, the structure is a "Three-part Song Form," commonly termed the "A-B-A" form.

The A-B-A form is common to both music and choreography. Popular songs, for instance, are based on this structure, usually with an extra statement of the first phrase to make the form A-A-B-A. And this same form is the basis of many themes used to build symphonic lengths.

Does it seem frighteningly complex? If it does, remember that a great many details have been condensed into a few pages. Actually, rhythm is a few simple principles dealing with time. It divides time into beats, groups these beats into measures, the measures into phrases, and then uses these phrases to build compositions. That's all rhythm is. All the rest is just a mass of tiresome detail — necessary, perhaps, but not necessarliy frightening.

And anyone who makes an intelligent study of rhythm will be pleasantly surprised to find that even the innumerable details will fall into patterns that make the job simple.

And best of all, rhythms can be practiced any time, anywhere, just by tapping a finger on the chair-arm or table-top.

THE END

ANDRE EGLEVSKY

an informal interview

This is the tenth in a series of interviews with famous choreographers and dancers from the realm of dance. The following interview with Andre Eglevsky was held back stage at the War Memorial Opera House during his appearance in San Francisco with the New York City Ballet during August of 1955.

(The First of Two Parts)

Q. Mr. Eglevsky, how did you come to take up ballet as your career?

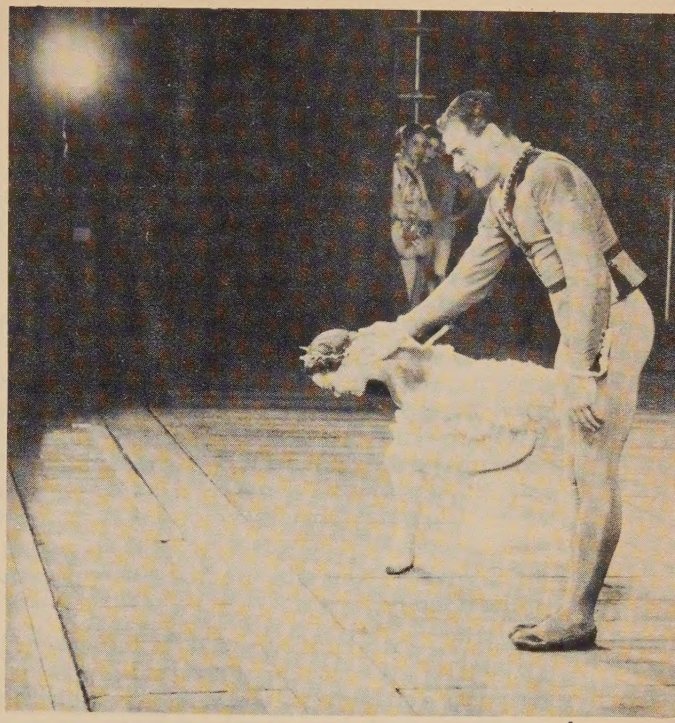
A. Well, it's a rather long story. I was born in Moscow, Russia, about the time of the Revolution. Because of this Revolution the food and conditions were very bad. In time I caught a bad cold which, due to my run-down condition turned into pneumonia. As time went on, instead of getting better, I grew continually worse. Then, when I was eight years old the doctor suggested to my folks that I ought to take up some sort of exercise in order to help me regain my strength. I took up boxing, but that proved very bad for me as the hard blows I received all too often about my chest did me much harm. Then they decided that I should take up tennis because I would be outdoors in the fresh air -- but tennis developed only one side, my right side, and actually my trouble was with my left lung. Finally they said I should take up dancing, but the family was against it because they had never really heard of dancing at that time. But never-the-less I did begin dancing — and that's how I got started.

Q. Who were some of your earlier teachers?

A. My very first teacher was Madame Maria Nevelskaya. She is now teaching in New York City. It was in Nice that she first had her school and that is where I first began to study dancing.

Q. Would you name some of the ballet companies in which you have danced?

A. At the age of about 14, I joined the original Ballet Russe that was Col. de Basil's Ballet Russe. It was around the end of 1933, I believe. After that I was in Leon Woicikowski's ballet,



Andre Eglevsky and Patricia Wilde —Bill Cogan

then in Rene Blum's ballet. Then in 1936 or '37 I worked with Michel Fokine. After that I worked in the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo which Massine had organized, the same company, but without Fokine. It came to America in 1937 or '38. During the war I worked with Ballet Theatre, then after that I worked with Marquis de Cuevas, once again with the original Ballet Russe, then back to Europe to work with Marquis de Cuevas again. That was about 1947-48 and in 1950 I joined my present company, the New York City Ballet.

Q. In other words, you've worked with all the major companies.

A. That's right.

Q. Mr. Eglevsky, many writers have written about your great elevation. They say that when you leap into the air you seem to remain suspended there for an unusually long moment. Just how do you manage to create this illusion?

A. Well, I think it's just an illusion, really. I believe one of the qualities I have is a good supple Plié, which of course is very essential in elevation. Actually, I just fool the public by coming down very softly — you might say, unnoticeably. This way the audience thinks you are still in the air, when you're already on the floor. ⟶

Q. I've also read varying reports as to the number of pirouettes you are able to execute successively. Would you tell me just what this record is?

A. I'd say it's about 15 or 16 pirouettes, maybe a couple of more.

Q. I've read 18.

A. Well, perhaps. I remember when I first came to the United States in 1938 I was out of a job and needed money very badly. I was studying at the School of American Ballet in New York City and one day Mr. Balanchine walked into the school and I sort of jokingly said, 'Mr. Balanchine, would you like to see 15 pirouettes for twenty-five cents?' That was cheap enough. He said, 'Oh, sure, if you can do them I'll give it to you.' At that time twenty-five cents could buy a lunch, and I did them and counted them out myself so that there was no fake about it. That way I earned my lunch. I'll tell you, roughly a pirouette depends a lot on the right foot balance which I learned from Nicholas Legat in London.

Q. Mr. Eglevsky, who was the first ballerina you partnered with professionally?

A. Danilova. I worked, as I said, in the original Ballet Russe in London, in the corps de ballet, and Mr. Lichine who was supposed to dance didn't show up that day and I was quickly taught the part, in a couple of hours or so. I danced in the afternoon performance and partnered Madame Danilova — don't ask her, though, how I did it.

Q. Since then you have partnered many different ballerinas. Would you name a few?

A. Well, in the first place I missed my opportunity to dance with Spessivtzeva, who wanted me to give a concert with her, because I was too slow in making up my mind. Otherwise I have danced with Danilova, Markova, Nemtchinova, Alonso, Toumanova, Baronova, Riabouchinska and others.

Q. In the main, what, if any, is the difference between partners, professionally speaking, that is?

A. Each one is different. One may be a little heavier, one a little lighter, another is good on balance, another you have to help. Yes, there is a great difference in partners and I don t like, nor do I think anyone likes, to change partners often, because you somehow adjust yourself to partnering a particular partner and you gain a certain confidence with each other. But when you change partners it's rather difficult. For instance, Igor Youskevitch is now teaming up with Alicia Alonso. It's quite understandable. For example, Dolin had Alicia Markova and wouldn't dance with anyone else. It's all right to change roles.

You do one ballet with one partner, another ballet with an-another partner. That is all right, because you think of one ballet and automatically you remember what to do. But to do the same ballet with different ballerinas is rather difficult.

Q. Do you have any favorite partners?

A. Well, I cannot say that I have a favorite partner. Each has her qualities, such as I recall Alicia Markova is very light and has excellent balance. Even if you don't put her into proper balance she will come into it by herself and somehow it is very easy.

Q. What do you think of the "star" system in ballet companies?

A. Well, being a star, I wouldn't say anything against it. But I think the public goes to the ballet so much more willingly when they have their favorite stars. Now you can have your favorite ballet, but you would want a favorite dancer to dance it.

Q. That seems especially true in America, does it not?

A. Especially true in America, and almost anywhere.

Q. Even in England?

A. Yes. I know when Margot Fonteyn dances, Covent Garden is usually sold out.

Q. However, Ninette de Valois, for example, has said that 'It is the production and not the individual that is important to us."

A. It's like in music. You may like Tchaikowsky's Concerto, but you also might prefer to have it played by Horwitz or Rubinstein, or some other favorite. (To Be Continued)

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by j marks

The Signature of LOCALITY

SAN FRANCISCO . . . dance activities in this city have reached an abundance which demonstrates their growing importance in the cultural center of the West. With the War Memorial Opera House, Marine's Theatre, the many little theatres, the Geary and Curran Theatres all going full power, it has been astounding just how many San Franciscans have enjoyed not only opera, instrumental recitals, dramas and musicals, but dance programs as well.

January saw the San Francisco Ballet occupy new residence of its own, where classes and rehearsals are in full swing. Ann Halprin of the Halprin-Lathrop Modern Dance School returned from an extensive tour of Israel. Ballet Celeste, an organization composed entirely of accomplished ballet dancers under the age of seventeen, gave its annual performance at Marines Theatre on December 26, 1955. The amazing Marcel Marceau, pantomimist, presented a limited number of performances at the Geary Theatre.

BALLET CELESTE . . . Scholasticaly, an event of great interest was the annual competition sponsored by Ballet Celeste. A jury consisting of Joseph Biskind, music critic of the Argonaut; Marion Van Tuyl, San Francisco reporter for Dance Magazine and editor of Impulse; Janet Sassoon, ballet soloist presntly with Dance Theatre Berlin; Robert Valentine, director on the Board for Ballet Celeste; Claire Pasch Early, Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo soloist and feature dancer in the original Oklahoma; and this writer, sat in judgment of the young people eagerly competing for scholarships in the school of the Ballet Celeste. This writer has never, and admittedly, had too vast a love for children in dance performance. It would seem that in watching the desperate efforts of these young people a lesson has been learned. Essentially, I expect, the credit goes to Merriem Lanova for her amazing gift with children and her capacity to teach them to maintain their childhood and at the same time acomplish a technical, performing gift which is, in my experience, without peer. In watching her three outstanding students, every member of the jury panel was impressed not only with the formative technique of these young ladies, but also with the sincere and powerful spark of genius which each possesses. Penelope Logios, Jeanine Thoene and Geraldine Uhlig, presented themselves with the utmost dignity and charm. It was all the jurors could do to select one of the three for the coveted highest award the Ballet Celeste offers to one child each year. For reason of her great intensity as both a technician and artist, Penelope Logios was awarded first place. And, because no possible second and third gradation could be made by the judges, both Mlle. Uhlig and Mlle. Thoene were awarded second place. I think

everyone is of the assumption that dance critics are forced into a great many unpleasant scholastic activities in the capacity of judges or advisers: the assumption holds a great deal of truth. But in taking part in the school activities of Ballet Celeste, I found myself filled with a renewed hope for the continued future of clasiscal dance.

THE THEATRE OF MARCEL MARCEAU . . . by this time the gifts of the Frenchman Marcel Marceau are a part of American theatre history. I don't expect anyone has failed to marvel at his astonishing control and power of projection of the slightest detail. Surely the greatest tribute to this artist is to be found in his success throughout Europe and America in holding his own on a stage in total silence for two hours. But, for us his performances here in San Francisco are interesting particularly because of just how they effect and extend our concepts of dance and dance movement.

The usual pantomimist takes great pride only in his abilities to recreate or represent the real world through the use of magnified gestures. The pantomimist is a realist in every respect. He works from the basis of what we know and attempts to project references to these known things of our lives. We are pleased with him when he succeeds in carrying out of the silence and the empty space of a stage, images and personalities which have living significance to us. The art is a very old one. We assume that it can reach the heights of pure art despite the degeneration into a mere game of theatrical charade which it has become in certain playful hands. Marcel Marceau certainly proves that pantomime can reach these highest standards both artistically and theatrically.

Marcel Marceau, wordless wonder.

I think the whole problem of his particular genius can be solved by taking note of his tendency in movement to employ not merely the isolated limb (the limb realistically involved in an image or act) but his entire body. This, of course, results in something akin to dance. And this intent upon full-bodied movement and dance is especially noticeable in the first part of the Marceau performance. Here the artist performs "Style Pantomimes," which is to say basic or abstract mimes. In watching him "walking" or "walking against the wind" or walking up the "staircase," we saw what was essentially the basic technique of his gift: pure movement controlled so utterly, intensified so perfectly that though the details of a superficial action are clearly outlined, we have partaken of far more. We have seen a physique moving in a manner which effects not only our minds and that mind's associations with reality, but our bodies and our physical empathy as well. Clearly stimulation of this sort is intricately sugestive of the

(page 120)

MANHATTAN DANSE PAS

by
Scotti D'Arcy

"FESTIVAL Of Music" television's golden hour and a half brought to viewers once again the master showmanship of impresario Sol Hurok with a variation on the much used Winston Churchill gem . . . "Never has so much been given so many." The camera's eye made each viewer's living room, front row center. Zachary Solov, Ballet Master of the Metropolitan, helped relieve the rigidity of the staging with his background dance sequences. The Omnibus presentation of The Kabuki Dancers was academic. Melissa Hayden on Steve Allen's "Tonight" gave us a lesson on how to be a **Choreographic Secretary.** ABC's "Famous Film Festival" presented "The Red Shoes" in two installments. We liked especially the Beryl Kaye Trio from England on Ed Sullivan's Show. Rod Alexander did a good job of choreography on the also ran "Springtime In Paris" spectacular. On the dramatic side . . . "Portrait Of A Ballerina" was a waste of air and the much fanfared "Sound and Fury" had only one dramatic highlight, Valerie Bettis. John Butler choreographed Eartha Kitt's exciting "Dance Of The Seven Veils" on the Omnibus production of "Salome." In recent weeks television has been giving dance a fair showing. In the not too distant future if given the proper support the dance will come of age on TV.

ONE of the most exciting events of the current season was the American Debut of Antonio and His Spanish Ballet presented by S. Hurok at the Broadway Theatre prior to a national tour. Antonio organized his company in Spain little more than a year ago, since then has given seasons in Monte Carlo, Paris, London and South America. Antonio's "Seguirgas Gitanas" danced with Carmen Rajas displays his impeccable precision and control. We can readily understand why Mollie-Panter-Downes says: "Experts here now rate the thirty-two-year-old Antonio as the finest male dancer in the world."

"25 YEARS Of American Dance" edited by Doris Hering is meticulously researched, filled with the delectable richness of the world of dance. We are looking forward to hearing Miss Hering lecture on "American Dance" for the Rockaway Forum at Rockaway Bench, Long Island.

MARCEL Marceau's performance at New York City Center is a ballet of evolution and movement. The Language of pantomime has no limits and Marceau is the supreme master.

TOHAN Films' ballet motion picture, "Romeo and Juliet," starring Ulanova, opens early in March at New York's chic Paris Theatre.

The New York City Ballet spring season gets underway February 28th and continues through March 25th at City Center. At this writing it is possible two new works will be presented. Jerome Robbins' "Music Appreciation" and Todd Bolender's ballet "Still Point." Jerome Robbins goes to Copenhagen in April to stage his ballet 'Fanfare" which was originally

done for the New York City Ballet.

The beginning of April will find the Ballet Theatre offering a three week spring season at the Metropolitan. Now that Nora Kaye is back with Ballet Theatre perhaps the repretoire will include "The Cage" which was written for Miss Kaye.

Off Broadway is flourishing this season. Anna Sokolow's Company will premiere "Poem" at the Brooklyn Academy, February 12. Edith Stephen Dance Workshop's evening of "Poetry and the Dance" proved extremely interesting, perhaps my praise is somewhat academic being a working poet. The Dance Laboratory series at the 92nd Street YMHA conducted by Walter Terry continues to offer the finest programs in town. During the month of February Mr. Terry had two choice interviews with Maria Tallchief and Jerome Robbins.

GEORGE Skibine and Marjorie Tallchief of The Marquis de Cuevas' Grand Ballet will head Ruth Page's company next fall under the auspices of Columbia Artists Management. The repertoire will include "The Merry Widow" and "Revenge" choreographed by Miss Page. Both ballets were presented earlier this season at the Broadway Theatre. Alicia Markova danced "The Merry Widow" and created a wonderful world of fantasy . . . that complimented Miss Page's efforts and Robert Zellar's music.

MRS. Jeanne South, Michael Richards and Armand Dubé have formed "The Connecticut Theatre of Cultural Dance" for the purpose of elevating the standard of dance in Connecticut. The organization will endeavor to educate the public on the dance, offer dance performances in connection with charities and benefits. This is a public spirited project and we bring it to the attention of "Dancing Star Readers" with the hope other states will follow in the footsteps of these three Connecticut pillars of culture.

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the San Francisco Dance Guild

It's History, Growth, Ideals and Aims

By MERVIN LEEDS

The San Francisco Dance League, one of the oldest organizations of its kind in the United States, celebrated its twentieth anniversary last year. The League is the outgrowth of an idea which began in 1934 when Carol Beals, teacher of ballet and modern dance, and I, Mervin Leeds (her husband), returned to San Francisco from our year-long honeymoon in New York City.

During the economic tailspin of 1933 we observed that touring ballet companies had folded their tents and disbanded. Modern dance lead by Martha Graham, Hanya Holm, Charles Weidman, Doris Humphrey, Helen Tamaris, and others in New York City struggled for public acceptance of performances which were less dependent upon resplendent costumes, scenery, and orchestral accompaniment. The cost of giving a concert was more than most aspirng concert dancers could afford. But dance, music, and theatre were in demand by new social groups who encouraged the creation of new materials in keeping with the changing times.

At a gathering of friends, dancers, and studio directors Carol and I reported our New York observations and learned in return that San Francisco dancers were facing similar conditions. Dancers throughout the nation were confronted with the problem of finding stage and audience; for without the opportunity for performances, they ceased to function. With the closing of the customary channels, dancers were forced to the realization that they, themselves, must open new outlets in order to develop careers. The belief grew that by pooling their efforts, by sharing information and experiences, dancers would benefit as a group.

Based on these premises, an organizational conference was held and the Dance Council of Northern California was formed. It served as a central exchange, or clearing house, for planning dance development and activities in the Bay Area. It became the pattern for "dance councils" in a number of other cities outside of California.

One of its first programs was a successful lecture-demonstration series conducted on Sunday afternoons over a period of three months. Nine of the leading resident exponents of modern dance explained and demonstrated the fundamental principles of their various dance techniques in terms comprehensible to the lay public. It was a new departure for many of them to express themselves in words, to re-think about their relationship to the people in the community, to discuss what they were attempting to do through dance. And the audiences appreciated knowing about the 'how's' and 'why's' as well as the artists' philosophies.

As interest grew, dance groups were formed and rehearsed in preparation for performances arranged by the Dance Council. "Workshop programs" were staged modestly in schools and attendance was restricted to Council members; then followed performances in larger auditoriums. New choreography was created, experiment was encouraged; young composers joined their efforts and contributed new music especially written for dance. John Cage, noted for his 'prepared piano', and Lou Harrison, with his innovations in percussion accompaniment, were stimulated by association with dancers through Council activities.

With the performance of "Changing World — Illusions of a Better Life" — a tremendous dance project involving the cooperation of several dance groups, 60 dancers and four choreographers — staged at the Curran Theatre in April, 1937, activities reached a peak.

As opportunities for employment expanded with the advent of military preparation, the major ballet companies were reassembled, show business began to blossom, and the modern dance groups dwindled. Marriages claimed some dancers, military preparations took others, colleges and high schools increased their facilities for modern dance. Then in October, 1938, the San Francisco Dance League adopted its present constitution under the leadership of Marian Van Tuyl, dance director at Mills College.

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The League's objectives are stated thus:

1. To increase interest in and appreciation of dance as an art form.
2. To stimulate and encourage creative activity in dance.
3. To make available to local audiences good dance performances.
4. To increase the dancer's knowledge of his own and related fields.
5. To help solve the economic and practical problems of professional dancers, teachers, and students.

The League has brought visiting dancers to San Francisco and presented concerts by Merce Cunningham (twice), Jean Erdman (twice), Harriet Ann Gray, Frankel and Ryder, Charles Weidman, Hanya Holm. It has cooperated with local concert management in presenting Martha Graham, Pauline Koner, and Jean Leon Destine. It has presented resident dancers in concerts at the Marines Memorial Theatre, Veterans Auditorium, Legion of Honor Little Theatre, Curran Theatre, in high school auditoriums, and in conjunction with the annual Art Festival sponsored by the San Francisco Art Commission. The League arranged for lecture-demonstrations and workshop programs at the San Francisco Museum of Art, the Academy of Ballet, and in various recreation centers sponsored by the Park and Recreation Department. It was host to the Sadlers Wells Ballet Company, Sujata and Osaka, and to the Agnes de Mille Dance Company.

From time to time the League publishes a newsletter, the DANCE LEAGUER, announcing League activities and a calendar of dance events in the San Francisco Bay Area for which notices from all dance studios are invited. The League supplies the San Francisco Public Library with a copy of DANCE OBSERVER magazine and encourages the maintenance of all dance publications in the main library's magazine room.

Among the long-range projects on the League's program are advocacy of (1) the construction of a public building to house "little theatre" groups and an auditorium of special design for multiple use by music, dance, and theatre groups; (2) the establishment of a dance archives and library; (3) a classification system for dance terminology, dance subject matter, dance notation, and dance theories or philosophies covering teaching methods, choreography, and cultural relationships in the fields of education, entertainment, and art.

Of more immediate interest to dancers within a radius of 100 miles of San Francisco is the League's project to develop a clearing house of information on career opportunities. This is roughly divided into the areas of education, entertainment, and art with the intention of answering the questions: (1) What background and training should I acquire if I wish to become a dance teacher, dance entertainer, dance artist? (2) Now that I have invested in eight or more years of training, how do I put it to work and collect dividends?

Liane Dayde and Michel Renault in the new 'Romeo and Juliet' ballet choreographed by Serge Lifar for the Paris Opera.

NINETTE DE VALOIS TO LECTURE IN THE U. S. NEXT FALL

Sadler's Wells director, Ninette de Valois will be presented by S. Hurok in her first North American lecture tour next season. Dame Ninette begins her nine-week junket across the country in mid-October speaking on 'The Sadler's Wells Ballet' and 'Ballet and the Contemporary Scene'.

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Membership in the San Francisco Dance League is open to dancers of all kinds and to patrons or those interested in furthering the League's objectives. Annual dues for professional members (teachers, directors, members of performing companies) are $5; student members, $3; associate members (non-dancers, patrons, etc.), $2. Contributions in greater amounts are welcomed and may be designated for specific purposes including scholarships in dance. ■

AMERICAN DANCER FINDS CREATIVE OUTLET IN MEXICO

by Peggy Munoz

In July, 1950, a young Negro dancer form Washington, D. C., arrived in Mexico City with one suitcase and a head full of ideas, plans and previously frustrated ambitions. From the window of his hotel on Avenida Chapultepec he looked across the street directly into a ballet studio. He was alone in a strange country with no apparent possibilities of realizing any of his great projects, so on sudden impulse he decided to visit the studio and find out at close range what was going on.

There, to his surprise, he found a ballet dancer he'd known in New York, a young man with mystic beliefs who told the stranger in prophetic tones, "Your vibrations are good. Mexico is the place for you."

This esoteric welcome proved to be the beginning of a new creative life for **Xavier Francis,** now considered one of Mexico's leading dancers and choreographers. Later in the day, the young mystic took him to the Academy of the Mexican Dance - - a government sponsored school of the dance - and before Xavier knew what was happening to him, he was hired as a teacher. Shortly afterward he was billed as a featured dancer with the Ballet Mexicano, one of the most original and exciting modern dance companies in the world today.

In the spring of 1951, the Ballet Mexicano produced Xavier's first attempt at choreography, a work called **Imagenes** dealing with the problem of prostitution. It was divided into three scenes: "Night Song," expressing desolation and loneliness of the streetwalker; "Divertisement for Women and Columns," an impression of good women giving in to strong sensual impulses; and "Orgy for Angels," the dance of sophisticated ladies with innocent men.

During the same season Xavier Francis danced the role of Padre Cielos in Jose Limon's gigantic Aztec ballet, **Los Cuatro Soles** (The Four Suns), to music by Carlos Chavez. The experience thoroughly impressed him with the dance potentials inherent to the Mexican composer's scores, and he immediately set to work on a new ballet of his own based on Chavez' "Toccata for Percussion Instruments." This resulted in **Tozcatl,** a modern version of Aztec sacrificial ceremonies, which is still considered one of the most stunning pieces in the repertory of the Ballet Mexicano. Yet even here the influences of Limon and of native sources were still too paramount. The young choreographer had not yet

Katherine Dunham in a Brazilian song and dance number at the Teatro Lirico, Mexico City. —Charles Wicke

encountered his own personal style.

But on August 7, 1953, Xavier Francis premiered a new ballet at the recently constructed Teatro de los Insurgentes, and it was at once evident that something exciting and completely different was on its way. For the first time Xavier had attempted to satire, and with superb results. His **The Jack-in-the-Box** and the **Little Men** was a devastating portrayal of modern civilization as seen through the eyes of an inanimate doll. Here was concise, stylized choreography making use of all the resources of modern dance to achieve a mature, ironic commentary on 20th century mankind, caged in cities, prey to advertising, rumors and demigods, and slaves of calculating machines. The modernistic decor and costumes were designed by Arnold Belkin with whom Francis has worked in close artistic collaboration ever since.

(page 112)

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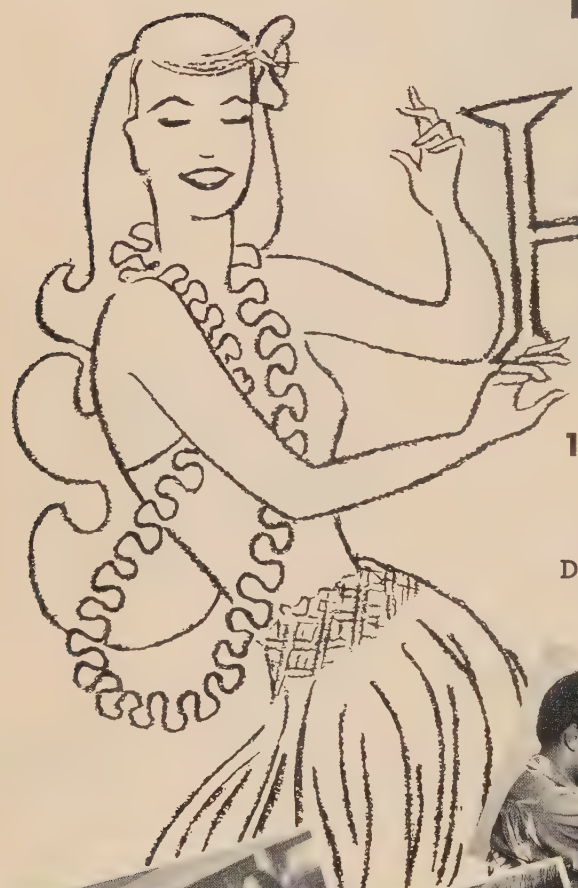

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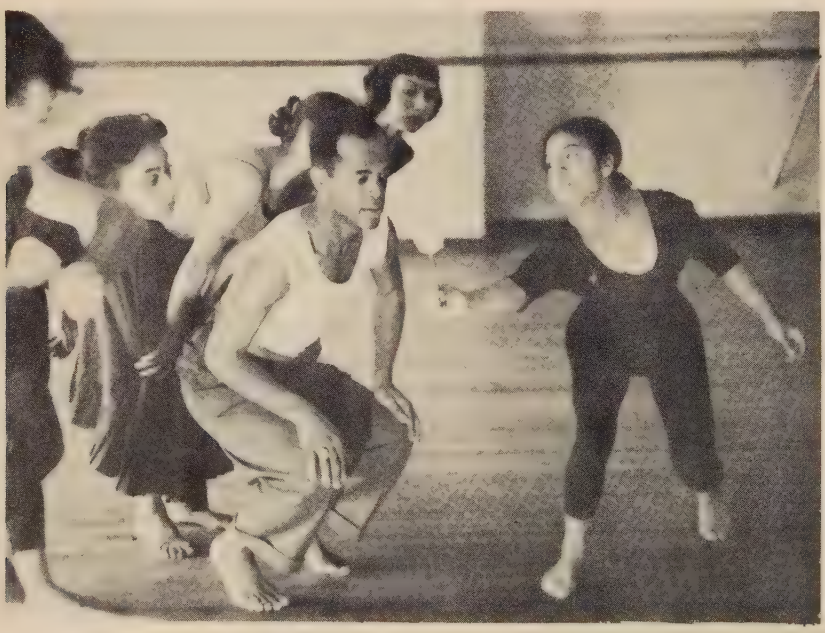
(from page 109)

The following year Xavier Francis also joined forces with the Scandinavian dancer Bodyl Genkel to found a new dance company in Mexico. The Nuevo Teatro de Danza gave its first public performance at the Palace of Fine Arts on November 18, 1954, with a repertory of four ballets. These were **The Jack-in-the-Box** and the **Little Men;** Elena Noriega's charming abstract on colorful folk material, **Three Mexican Toys;** Bodyl Genkel's **Metamorphosis;** and Xavier Francis' most recent work, **The Coming of Light.** The latter, inspired by an Arnold Belkin painting, made use of only two characters: The Women, danced by Miss Genkel, and the Man, interpreted by Xavier Francis. Belkin again did the sets and costumes.

The Coming of Light gave final proof of Xavier's ability to express himself in lyric as well as satiric really had something important to say. Where before he had ridiculed humanity, now he sang a hymn of praise to man's determination to reach light through the only really vital means available to him: hope, hard physical labor, and natural creativity. States the 27-year-old choreographer: "The attempt of Adam and Eve to reconstruct their lost paradise is symbolic here as an eternal human force."

In recognition of Xavier Francis' contribution to the Mexican dance, the National Institute of Fine Arts invited him last spring to do the choreography for the local premiere of Honneger's oratorio, **Joan of Arc at the Stake.** The mode of expression was again satire, and Francis achieved some of the most striking dance effects ever seen in Mexico with his ballet of the Card Game. The production as a whole was a tremendous artistic triumph, musically, choreo-



Xavier Francis and his company rehearse in his new Mexico City studio.

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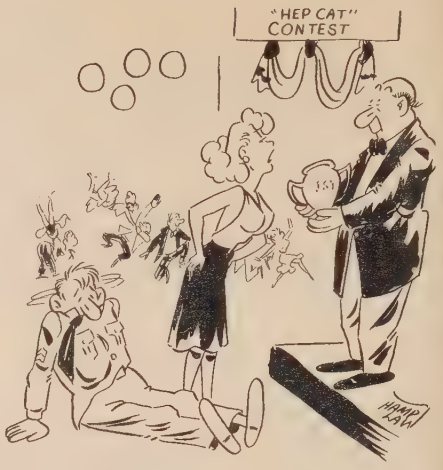
This past August, Xavier and Bodyl Genkel inaugurated their own dance studio under the name of their professional company, the Nuevo Teatro de Danza. The faculty of the new school includes such well-known Mexican dancers as Elena Noriega, Guillermina Bravo, Nellie Happee, Farnesio de Bernal, and John Fealy. Classes are offered at 16 de Septiembre No. 26 altos in modern, regional and classic dance, and public performances will be held in the near future within the studio itself.

Although Xavier Francis has previously studied in New York with the New Dance Group, and appeared professionally with Hadassah and her company as well as with the Contemporary Dance Company of New York, he feels that he needed Mexico to find himself as an artist.

"I like to be where things are budding," he told us. "I think that Mexico is the right place for a young person to be. The people are basically more dance-wise here; they intuitively feel the necessity and the beauty of dance. And in Mexico we don't have to make a conscious effort to go back and find the beginnings of our art. The Indians are here all around us, beating into the earth with their feet, expressing the primitive urge to identify themselves with the land that yields them life; whereas folk dance in the United States was all imported from England.

"And as for the present emphasis on nationalism in Mexican art, this too is a necessary beginning. Fundamentally, however, I feel that dance is sufficient unto itself, and my colleagues and I want above all to express ourselves as dancers and as human beings in universal terms." ■



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Sincerely yours,
Evelyn Rufener's Dance Studios
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ditor:

We greatly appreciate the response f your dance digest in a book review f our **"Rudiments of Ballroom Dancing"** h your November isue. We think it ry well put, and could think of no ner wordage to explain the contents this book.

We have enjoyed gleaning through our "Dancing Star" and feel that you re doing a wonderful job in procuring nd interpreting materials from afar and ear. Of course your magazine will hicken as time goes on, but please ep it in the "Digest" size as so many eople are conscious of "Digest Books" ch as the Readers' Digest, Medical igest, etc.; and in this you should win rst place among the dance magazines.

I had my ballet foundation work be re ever going into ballroom training nd teaching of ballroom dancing, and elieve that every ballroom teacher hould have at least six months to one ear in ballet training.

In our book, under the section of "Introduction to Routine Dancing" we have rought out the fact of "perfect" and mperfect" fox trot steps. I have, upon number of occasions, had teachers who had taught ballroom dancing for ears) confess that they actually danced and out of rhythm in the Fox Trot, nd I said that I did the same; but ver knowing just why. Do you know was quite some time before I discovered the reason why! I made the discovery through rhythms that the reason was that fox trot steps, for the most part, were set to a measure and half of music. We still teach the "imperfect" stepssteps to our students in their basic work because everyone else does, but make definite changes when it comes to routining the fox trot steps to the music. We hope that more teachers will take advantage of the "perfect" steps and that this will be included in the notes of those who are most interested in "Standardization of ballroom dance steps."

Very sincerely yours,
Mark Barton.
Seattle, Washington.

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Evelyn and John Saunders.
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Editor:

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Dolly Parker.
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'Something told me I should have taken up law instead of dancing!'

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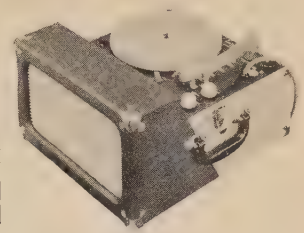

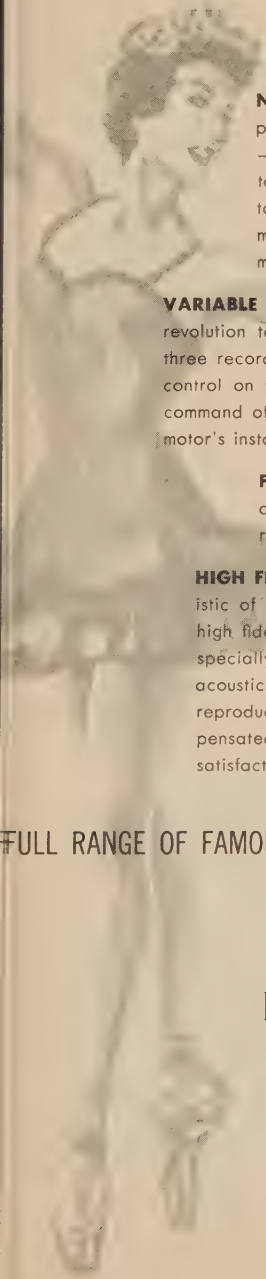

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(from page 101)

nature of dance. Such movement is capable of communicating emotions and ideas without the evocation of superficial and imagined objects usual to pantomime. In the piece "Youth, Maturity, Old Age, and Death" (surely the finest section of the program), Marcel Marceau communicated the basic life cycle of man with vast sympathy, simplicity and clarity. It was nearly the non-objective movement of the abstract dance rather than the contrived gestures of the pantomime.

It is for reasons such as these that Marcel Marceau has been so loudly admired by dancers. I do not at all contend that he is a dancer nor that he should specialize in forms more completely based on dance concepts. I merely state that his individual gift and its powers of communication are very likely due to the degree to which he has intuitively amalgamated certain principles of dance with those of pantomime. He is, whether in the theatre of Bip or the dance of his technique, indeed a wordless wonder.

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Eddy Smith, formerly with Horace Heidt, is pictured with his Eddyettes. At present he is engaged in staging dance numbers for WCCO–TV–dancing commercials for Buick), KEYD–TV basketball games as well as for theatres and night clubs. During the summer his 16-girl-line tours the fair circuit. The act is booked by MCA, Hal Garvin and Marlo agencies.

STUDIO EVENTS....

★ ★ ★ The Cecchetti Council of America recently concluded a successful refresher course for teachers and students at the Hotel Mark Hopkins in San Francisco. On the examining board were: Elva Eilers, Shiela Foy, Carole Singer, Joanne Nix, Glenna Bell Moenning, Olga Fricker, Mona Frances, Betty Merriweather and Guillermo del Oro.

★ ★ ★ The Gladys Hight School of Dancing in Chicago was the producer of a ballet which was held at the 8th Street Theatre. This event was a benefit for the 'Youth Organization of America', which is actively engaged in helping to combat juvenile delinquency.

★ ★ ★ Dancers, Betty and Bob Kirkpatrick who formerly operated the Erie Academy of Dance for more than 18 years in Erie, Pa., are now affiliated with the 'Dance School Center' in San Mateo, California.

★ ★ ★ The Edith Stephen Dance Workshop presented the second in a series of programs devoted to dance and the related arts. 'Painting and the Dance' was held Mar. 4th at the Edith Stephen Studio in N.Y.C. Participating dancers were: Teresa Brunetti, Mary Baker, Anita Kumove, Milton Oleaga, Carol Wasserman, Cleo Quitman and Phyllis Hoenig. Painters included: Augustus Goertz, Harry Jackson, Dorothy Kreymborg and Leo Garel.

★ ★ ★ The National Council of Dance Teacher Organizations will hold a meeting at the Hotel Sheraton Astor in N.Y. City on March 11th.

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HUROK TO MOSCOW

S. Hurok departed Feb 29, for Moscow, where he plans to invite leading members of the cast of his film 'The Ballet of Romeo and Juliet' to attend the American Premiere which has been set for April 2 in New York City's Paris Theatre. Included among the Bolshoi Theatre's repertoire of famous dancers invited to appear at the opening is Galina Ulanova.

'The Ballet of Romeo and Juliet' is a full length color movie with English dialogue, based on the score by Sergei Prokofieff and patterned after the love story by Shakespeare.

Grand Prize winner in the 1955 Cannes Film Festival 'for its color and skill in adopting ballet to the screen and for Ulanova's dancing', the picture features the entire Moscow Bolshoi Theatre Ballet Company.

D M of W ELECTS OFFICERS

The following officers were elected during the Dance Masters of Wisconsin regular meeting held, Feb. 26, 1956: Leo Kehl, President, Adele Artinian, Vice President, Richard Verhoeven, Sec., Lois Martens, Treas., Edna Christensen, Educational Director and Jack Wolfram, Sergeant of Arms.

D B G MAKES GRANTS

The Dance Business Group of America, Inc., announces its decision to grant $1000 to the Atlanta Civic Ballet Co. In April a ballet festival will be held in Atlanta, Ga. There will be five participating groups including the Atlanta Civic Ballet, Southern Ballet (of Atlanta), Brimingham (Ala.) Civic Ballet, Tampa Civic Ballet and Ballet Guild of Greater Miami.

The DBG contributed to the expenses of this event as well as to the expenses of the other four participating groups.

Mrs. Margurite Pollard, Dance Director for the Fred Astaire Western Division, poses with a few of her professional training course members at Santa Barbara, California.

Pictured with Art Baker (You Asked For It TV program) are former professionals Val Dez & Peggy. The couple now conduct a successful dance school in Hayward, California. The 'You Asked For It' program, sponsored by Skippy Peanut Butter, is seen over KGO in Northern Calif. As indicated by the show's name viewers throughout America write in requesting to see their favorite personalities. The dance requested of Val Dez & Peggy was their famous 'chain dance' which they popularized in the 1930's.

Folk Dance Guide
Sixth Annual Edition
by Paul Schwartz
P.O. Box 342 Cooper Station
New York 3, N.Y.
24 pp, $1.

This annual guide to Folk dance activities is one that any folk dance enthusiast might well look forward to with relish, for each successive edition appears to out do its predecessor in range and scope of interesting material. Included on the contents page of this issue are such varied subjects as: Folk Dance in the United States, National Directory of Instruction Groups, Annual Events, Dance Through the Ages and Selected Bibliography.

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Eva Varady student, Mary Jane Moncrieff, successfully passed the auditions for the High School of Performing Arts in N.Y.City. Mary Jane is a member of the Children's Theatre Guild Ballet Co.

An action-shot taken during the 25th Anniversary Recital of the Soter Economides School of Dancing in Endicott, New York. Left to right: Effie Mae Hamm, Patricia Zappia, Jean Benjamin, Ann Marie Petrolle, Joanne Trasisi Sheila Transky, Vennie Rizzi and Sandra Reynolds.

M-I-S-S-I-S-S-I-P-P-I

A Novelty Tap Routine for Children 5 to 8 years old

by Al Gilbert

STEP FOUR

MEAS.	COUNT	TERM
13	1	LETTER "M" CHILD points R forefinger to his block, ready to pick it up.
	2	LETTER "I" repeats movement.
	3	LETTER "S" repeats movement.
	4	Rest
14	5	LETTER "S" repeats movement.
	6	LETTER "I" repeats movement.
	7	LETTER "S" repeats movement.
	8	Rest
15	1	LETTER "S" repeats movement.
	2	LETTER "I" repeats movement.
	3	LETTER "P" repeats movement.
	4	LETTER "P" repeats movement.
16	5	LETTER "I" repeats movement.
	6,7	ALL pick up blocks and hold them in R hand to R side.

DANCE

STEP FIVE

17	8&1	Shuffle step R
	2&3	Shuffle step L
	4	Step R to side R
18	5	Dig L to R
	6	Step L to side L
	7	Dig R to L
19	8	Step R to side R
	1	Kick L cross front of R
	2	Step L to side L
	3	Kick R cross front of L
	4	Step R
20	&5	Shuffle L
	&6	Ballchange L-R
	7	Tap L heel to L
	8	Hold

STEP SIX

21	1	Step L to side L
	2	Step R to L
	3	Step L to side L
	4	Dig R to L
22	5-8	Reverse Meas. 21
23	1,2	Stamp R to R
	3,4	Stamp L to L
24	5,6	Place block down between feet, slightly in front, face down.
	7,8	Jump back, feet together

STEP SEVEN

25	1	Step R on top of block
	2	Drop R heel (still on top of block)
	3	Step L on top of block
	4	Drop L heel (on top of block) (now standing on block)
26	5	Step R down on R side of block
	6	Step L down on L side of block
	7	Step R up on top of block
	8	Step L up on top of block
27	1-4	Repeat Meas. 26
28	&5	Shuffle R (still on top of block)
	&6	Ballchange R-L (still on top of block)
	7,8	Jump both feet off in back of block.

STEP EIGHT

29	1	Step R to side R (beginning R walking turn)
	2	Step L, making 1/2 turn (continuing walking turn)
	3	Step R to side R (completing walking turn)
	4	Clap hands
30	5-8	Reverse Meas. 29
31	1-3	Repeat Meas. 29
	4	Step L to R, both feet are now directly behind block
32	5-8	Children pick up blocks so that all letters face audience and yell "MISSISSIPPI!"

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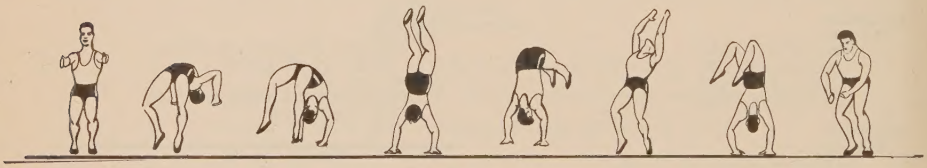
12. ONE HAND FLIP-FLOPS

Start the same as for a regular flip-flop. Bend knees deep, swing both arms backward and immediately spring from both feet, throwing both arms forward and upward over head, pushing stomach forward and head backward. As body goes over backwards in a regular flip-flop, land on one hand only. As feet land on the floor, spring backwards and upwards and over into another flip-flop and land on the opposite hand this time. Keep on alternating left and right hand across the room. Be sure to always swing both arms over and land on only one.



SPIRAL FLIP-FLOPS

Start the same as for a regular flip-flop, facing the audience. As you land on the hands and the feet are coming down, lean slightly to one side so as to land just sideward of the starting position. This is a very difficult flip-flop to learn. In order to do spiral flip-flops, you must first be able to do spotting flip-flops. Spiral flip-flops are spotting flip-flops in which the body travels directly sideward.

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